

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

L/AMEMBASSY BONN 573

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION USEC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 1056

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECIN, PFOR, EEC, EI

SUBJECT: US/EC CONSULTATIONS: EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE

REFS: DUBLIN 1047, 1048

SUMMARY: THE IRISH CHAIRMAN OF THE EC SIDE IN THE JUNE 10-14 CAIRO EC/ARAB MEETING PROFESSED HIMSELF AS PLEASED WITH THE OUT-COME OF THE TALKS. THE EC MANAGED TO STEER THE ARABS AWAY FROM POLITICAL CONFRONTATION AND HELD THE LINE ON DENATIONALIZED EXPERTS, THUS AVOIDING THE PLO ISSUE, AND HAVE AGREED TO MEET AGAIN IN JULY, PROBABLY IN ROME. THE EC ALSO SIDE-STEPPED THE ARABS; INSISTENCE THAT THERE COULD BE NO "WORKING PARTY MEETINGS" UNTIL THERE HAD BEEN A MEETING OF THE "GENERAL COMMITTEE" AS STATED IN THEIR MANDATE. THE FORMULA ARRIVED AT IS THAT THE JULY MEETING WILL BE A "STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS" AND, DESPITE THE STATEMENT THAT THE GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING IS DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE EC HAS NO PRESENT INTENTION TO ACQUIESCE IN SUCH A CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD BE DEFINITION INCLUDE DELEGATES FROM EACH COUNTRY INCLUDING THE PLO IDENTIFIED AS SUCH. THE GERMAN ADVISER TO THE EC SIDE HAS UNDERTAKEN TO THINK ABOUT A VIABLE AND VISIBLE COOPERATIVE PROJECT THAT MIGHT BE TABLED AT THE JULY MEETING BUT THE IRISH CHAIRMAN IS NOT CONVINCED THAT ONE COULD OR SHOULD BE INJECTED INTO THE TALKS SO EARLY. END SUMMARY.

1. EAMMONN GALLAGHER, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF IRISH DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BRIEFED US TODAY ON JUNE 10-14 MEETING IN CAIRO OF EC AND ARAB EXPERTS. GALLAGHER HEADED EC TEAM AND WAS PRINCIPAL EC SPOKESMAN. HE HAS PROVIDED US WITH COPIES OF JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE MEETING AS WELL AS CONFIDENTIAL EC-ARAB JOINT MEMORANDUM WHICH WAS AGREED TO BY PARTIES. BOTH DOCUMENTS TRANSMITTED SEPTELS, BUT OUR POSSESSION OF LATTER SHOULD NOT BE REVEALED, SINCE IT WOULD PROVE EMBARRASSING TO IRISH.

2. GALLAGHER SAID THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETINGS WAS GOOD. THE ARAB LEAGUE WAS CLEARLY ANXIOUS THAT AN EC/ARAB COOPERATION AGREEMENT SHOULD BE REACHED, AND GALLAGHER WAS ABLE TO ELIMINATE A NUMBER OF OBSTACLES BY HAVING AN OCCASIONAL PRIVATE WORD WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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MAHMOUD RIAD WHO IN TURN WORKED OUT COMPROMISES WITH HIS ARAB COLLEAGUES. GALLAGHER ADDED THAT THE RICH OIL STATES SEEMED SOMEWHAT INDIFFERENT TO REACHING AGREEMENT, AND THE ALGERIANS WERE AS NEGATIVE AS USUAL. IT WAS CLEAR TO GALLAGHER THAT THE PALESTINIANS PRESENT ON ARAB SIDE WERE PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO FACILITATE REACHING OF AGREEMENT. DURING THE FIRST DAY THE ARABS PRESSED HARD ON QUESTIONS OF EC/ISRAEL ECONOMIC AGREEMENT, BUT AFTER GALLAGHER TOLD RIAD THIS WAS PROVING TO BE AN OBSTACLE TO THE PROGRESS OF

THE DIALOGUE, THE MATTER WAS DROPPED. IN GENERAL, GALLAGHER WAS SATISFIED THAT PARTICIPANTS AVOIDED HAVING TALKS DEGENERATE INTO POLITICAL DEBATE.

3. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL POINTS AGREED UPON IN THE "JOINT MEMORANDUM" ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. DIALOGUE'S "POLITICAL DIMENSIONS" ARE TO RENEW LINKS BETWEEN THE NEIGHBORING REGIONS, ELIMINATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS, AND ESTABLISH BASES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION.

B. DIALOGUE SHOULD DEVELOP INTO COOPERATION IN BROAD SPECTRUM OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

C. DIALOGUE IS BASED ON EQUALITY OF PARTNERS, RESPECT FOR EXISTING BILATERAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN EC AND ARABS AND RESPECT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY OVER NATURAL RESOURCES.

D. OBJECTIVES OF DIALOGUE IN SIX AREAS OF COOPERATION ARE SPELLED OUT: (1) INDUSTRIALIZATION, (2) BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE, (3) AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, (4) FINANCIAL COOPERATION, (5) TRADE AND (6) SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION, CULTURAL, LABOR AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

E. PENDING THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE, WHICH IS DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, MEETING OF EXPERTS WILL BE RESUMED PERIODICALLY IN THE FORM OF "STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS." FIRST MEETING OF COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS WILL BE IN A EUROPEAN CITY IN JULY. THERE WILL BE JOINT EUROPEAN AND ARAB CHAIRMANSHIP OF MEETINGS.

4. GALLAGHER EXPLAINED THAT THE INSERTION OF TWO POLITICAL PARAGRAPHS, PARAS 2 AND 3 OF JOINT MEMORANDUM (SUMMARIZED IN PARA 3-1 ABOVE) WAS CONCEDED TO RIAD BY EC EXPERTS TO GIVE HIM ARGUMENT AGAINST THOSE ARABS WHO WANTED TO SAY MORE ABOUT EC/ISRAEL AGREEMENT. THE FINAL PARA WAS INSERTED AT THE INSISTENCE OF

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THE EC. ARABS WANTED SEPARATE ACTICLE ON COOPERATION IN PEACEFUL USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY, BUT EC WOULD NOT GIVE MORE THAN MENTION OF NUCLEAR COOPERATION IN PARAGRAPHS ON AGRICULTURE AND SCIENCE. IN TRADE PARAGRAPH, ARABS SOUGHT LANGUAGE SUCH AS "ACCESS" TO EUROPEAN MARKETS (WHICH WOULD IMPLY TARIFF CONCESSIONS) AS WELL AS DEMAND FOR IDENTICAL TRADE TREATMENT BY EC FOR ALL ARAB STATES. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT TREATMENT GIVEN BEST TREATED ARAB COUNTRY WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE AVAILABLE TO ALL. EC TEAM SUCCEEDED IN PERSUADING ARABS THAT TRADE MATTERS SHOULD BE SORTED OUT BY COMPETENT TECHNICAL EXPERTS, AND NOT BY POLITICIANS. ANOTHER DEMAND PUT FORWARD BY ARABS WAS FOR CERTAIN QUARANTEES FOR ARAB WORKERS IN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY GUARANTEES FOR TRAINING. EC DELEGATION REFUSED, POINTING OUT SUCH GUARANTEES DO NOT EVEN EXIST AMONG EC MEMBERS AND THEREFORE COULD NOT BE EXTENDED TO NON-MEMBERS.

5. A NUMBER OF SENSITIVE TOPICS, SUCH AS GUARANTEED VALUE OF ARAB FINANCIAL ASSETS IN EC TARIFFS AND NTBS WERE NOT INCLUDED IN JOINT MEMORANDUM. IN ORDER TO SATISFY THE MORE DEMANDING ARAB STATES, GALLAGHER AND RIAD AGREED THAT RIAD WOULD SEND GALLAGHER A LETTER STATING THAT THE ARABS HAD AGREED AMONG THEMSELVES TO RAISE CERTAIN ADDITIONAL TOPICS AT THE NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS MEETING AND THAT GALLAGHER HAD STATED TO RIAD THAT THERE WOULD BE EC EXPERTS PRESENT COMPETENT TO "HANDLE THE TOPICS." AS GALLAGHER COMMENTED TO US, ARABS CAN RAISE ANYTHING THEY WISH DURING THE NEXT MEETING. THE PROPOSED LETTER HELPS RIAD CREATE THE IMPRESSION AMONG HIS MORE RADICAL ARAB COLLEAGUES THAT THE EC IS WILLING TO DEAL WITH SENSITIVE TOPICS OUTSIDE THE AGREED-TO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WHEN, IN FACT, THE EC PRESENTLY INTENDS TO STAY WITH THE AGREED TOPICS.

6. IT IS HOPED NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD IN ROME DURING LAST TEN DAYS OF JULY. SINCE ITALY WILL HAVE EC PRESIDENCY, ITALIANS WILL HEAD THE EC DELEGATION. STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS, WHICH DOES NOT INCLUDE PALESTINIANS PER SE, WILL DIVIDE INTO TECHNICAL GROUPS WHICH ARE IN EFFECT WORKING PARTIES. THIS AVOIDS CONVENING OF "GENERAL COMMITTEE" WHICH WOULD HAVE FORMAL PLO REPRESENTATION, ALTHOUGH IT IS CONCEDED THAT IT MUST BE CONVENED AT SOME UNSPECIFIED TIME IN FUTURE. THE GERMAN EXPERT WAS CHARGED WITH INVESTIGATING A TANGIBLE PILOT PROJECT FOR DISCUSSION AT THE ROME EXPERTS MEETING IN ORDER TO SHOW THAT THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE IS MAKING CONFIDENTIAL

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PROGRESS.

7. COMMENT: GALLAGHER FELT THAT THESE DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS WERE GRADUALLY MOVING ALONG A PATH SATISFACTORY TO THE EC. GIVEN THE LIMITED MANDATE THE ARABS HAD TO WORK WITH, I.E., ONLY A FULL GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING, GALLAGHER FELT THAT GETTING THE ARABS TO AGREE TO A CONTINUING SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPD WS WOULD ALLOW BOTH SIDES TO HONE THE ISSUES AND POSSIBILITIES UNDER EACH OF THE SIX OBJECTIVES AND "CARRY THEM ALONG FOR SOME TIME TO COME." WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT GALLAGHER PRESENTLY FEELS THAT THE GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING INVOLVING THE PLO AS SUCH CAN BE PUT OFF INDEFINITELY, OR PERHAPS UNTIL INTERNATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE.

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